



Minutes: TU Dublin SU Student Council Meeting

Date: 13th March 2024

Time: 6pm

Location: East Quad – Room EQ-116

Present:

Chairperson	Aoife O'Brien
President	Brian Jordan
Vice President - Comms & Media, Deputy President	Louise Kavanagh
Vice President – Welfare & Equality	Nekesa Khisa Nancy
Vice President – Academic Affairs	Shauna O'Toole
Blanchardstown Campus Vice President	Jeremy Lawler
City Campus Vice President	Peter McCann
Tallaght Campus Vice President	Sheran Bahadir

Gender & Equality PTO
Sustainability PTO
Access PTO
Ethnic Diversity PTO
Mature Officer PTO
Gaeilge PTO
LGBTQ+ PTO
Disabilities PTO

Apologies:

In Attendance:	USI Candidates 2024
Clerk to the Council	Liam Cosgrove
Minute Taker	Trish Cullen

The Chair welcomed everyone to Student Council. The agenda was accepted by the Council.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING	Action item
Minutes from the last meeting were approved. Amendment - When mentioning the elevator in BST its one elevator now multiple - Alex Amendment to last meeting regarding welfare issue – Annabel Amended minutes approved and seconded. Minutes passed unanimously by all.	
2. Matters Arising	Action item
No matters arising from the last meeting.	



3. Correspondence	
From Electoral Commission, Correspondence sent to candidates. Letter can be found here	
4. ELECTORAL Commission Chair Selection Panel	
Student Council will nominate a Councillor to sit on the Selection Panel of TU Dublin Students' Union Chair of the Electoral Commission – Brian explained this to student councillors. Oisín – Nominated himself and gave brief speech, he is running for PT Position and has been part of the student council for 3 years. Oisín was unanimously elected to panel.	
5. Hustings	
<p><u>Gender Equality:</u> Annabel Biddulph – Gave 2 min speech, 5 main points, wants to Support gender equality in academia (i.e. Women in STEM, Men in Early Childhood, etc.) - Bring awareness to Men's Mental Health initiatives (i.e. Boys Get Sad Too) - Raise awareness of available Domestic Violence supports and how to access them (I.e. Women's Aid & Men's Aid) - Run a campaign recognising the achievements of female presenting individuals within historically male-dominated fields, with the view of encouraging engagement in these fields. - Establish a 'Gender Equality' standing committee, with a view to tackling the ongoing issue of misogyny on campus (as well as any other issues that may arise) 1 question from Louise, how do you plan on making these things happen, Answer, raising awareness by doing campaigns.</p> <p><u>Sustainability:</u> Yvonnick Hessou – Gave 2 min speech, Passion relation to climate, he has studied this since high school main going is to raise awareness about energy and sustainability and reducing food waste. Q. Alex – are you ready to fight with TU Dublin with the likes of BST which has many problems a. he is willing to work with green. Q. Louise how are you going to be able to set out your goes in 6 hours. A. it's one of his main goals to make a good impression. Q. Marco, have you ever been involved in any sustainability project, A. No because this is his first year.</p> <p><u>Ethnic Diversity:</u> Matheus Diniz, - No Show – Will Reopen Israel Ngombo – No Show – Will Reopen</p> <p><u>Gaeilge:</u> Éadaoin Ó Snodaigh – Dia dhaoibh is mise Éadaoin. Táim I mbliain a 2 ag déanamh ríomheolaíocht. Bhí mé mar Oifigeach Gaeilge san ollscoil i mbliana (2023-2024) agus ba</p>	



bhreá liom a bheith libh arís an bhliain seo chugainn. I rith m’am mar Oifigeach Gaeilge, cinntigh mé go mbeidh daltaí in ann a n-ainmneacha oifigiúil(le síneadh fada) a fháil ar a gcártaí aitheantais. Tá sé mar chuspóir agam don bhliain seo chugainn go mbeidh níos mó dhátheangachas le feiceáil ar champas agus ar líne. – was the Irish officer this year, she got the fada on the student cards, for next year she would like to organise such no Gaelic earlier next year, she already done this this year.
 Q. Have you come across any challenges this year and how did you overcome them, a. one of the main difficulties this year was that the Irish staff member for TU Dublin went on maternity leave, so that put a hold on a lot of things.
 Q. how much do you like Gaelic? Answer - Gaelic is my life.

Disabilities:

Oisín Putt - Oisín (Ush) is a 3rd year Media Production student in TUD. He was born with Spina Bífida, he has been a wheelchair user for most of his life. has aspired to be an advocate for young people with disabilities in Ireland. His main areas on disability rights issues include Public Transport, Accessibility in the hospitality sector. Disability inclusive in third level education and the work force. He’s been a member of TUDSU for 3 years in a row. Is also a former Part-Time Officer. He wants to run for disability officer 24/25 to ensure that every student with a disability has the support and services they need to experience college life.

Q. What is you plan to help students with disabilities Oisín answered – He was recently approached by the chaplain in Tallaght and by another student with vision impairment, would like to set up a disability society.

Cara Clarke – Cara is an autistic social care student. She is involved in climate advocacy and have work, academic and lived experience with disability

If elected as disability officer she would advocate for

1. The creation of a forum for students with disabilities to share their ideas and experiences with the students’ union
 2. Increased accessibility and information for all students with disabilities
 3. TUD to work towards Autism Friendly University status
 4. Increased self-advocacy power for students through training and campaigning
 5. Recognition of the sunflower lanyard scheme and JAM card scheme for people with hidden disabilities within TUD
- students to fight for themselves, self-advocacy.

Q. What are your plans for BST facilities?

Carra answered that she would annoy them constantly.

Oisín – mention this in his speech, he would work closely with the city VP and annoy the college.

6. USI Hustings

Action item

President:

Chris Clifford - He served in Kerry SU and USI, Chris said how he is aware of the struggles that students are going through. – He mentioned in his speech Expansion of USI, which would involve collaborating with the team to develop a strategy plan for USI for the next 3 years. He wants accountability for USI officers, he wants the officer reports to be accountable for. Also wants further



work on the TRI-Lateral Agreement. Also mentioned Engagement, he is committed to having increased on campus visits, more campaigns on the ground, networking between SU president to get a greater understanding of what works best for each MO. Wants an increase in specific training days for officers, PTO training which focuses on their specific niche rather than on size fits all. If elected, he wants voting registration to roll out from early September. Committed to sign 6k student up for the general elections.

Chris's full manifesto can be found [here](#)

Eoin Crossen - Eoin, has been a sabbatical officer in DCU and is in his second year as VP Academic Life in DCU Students' Union he has been a passionate student campaigner for his entire time in DCU, from being an active class representative, to being class rep council chair in DCU for two years, to attending Comhdháil. He has been an active supporter of USI's work, while still calling out what he thinks isn't right when needed.

Eoin said how we are staring down the barrel of an election and wants to produce a student manifesto, he wants to increase the USI presence on campuses. He wants to get feedback from students and wants to do a USI survey every year. Eoin also mentioned Cost of living, Grassroots support, USI National Survey, USI & NUS – USI, Sustainability and HEA Board Position. Eoin said how students need to gain trust in USI – Eoin's full manifesto can be found [here](#)

A number of questions were asked to both candidates, which included the following.

Q. to both candidates, you both mentioned grass roots, define,

A. Eoin wants to get down to ground with students on the ground, wants to hear the problems on the ground.

A. Chris. Getting students out there to say how they are feeling, talking to students, getting students to see who they are and what they do.

Q. Mandates are not achieved – what are you going to do so this does not happen this year.

A. Working with the workplan and mandate, wants officer to be accountable, giving the officers' training. Eoin – also wants to provide officer training especially for 1st year accountable officers coming in. the team need to hold each other.

Q. How will both candidates convince students to vote yes to stay in the USI –

A. Eoin - Strength in unity, believes that it's important that you come to USI to fix issues, wants elected officers to be more on the ground than ever before, USI have so much to gain from TU Dublin and TU Dublin has so much to gain for USI

A. Chris – not a lot of people leave, it can take up to 7 years to come back into the union if you leave, we are stronger together, we will work together to get the best outcome.

Q. What are the 2 largest main issues in USI right now and how would you fix them.

A. Chris - Accountability – is a big thing and the structure.

A. Eoin - Accountability and USI – Reforming USI Elections



VP Academic Affairs:

Bryan O'Mahony

Bryan is currently Vice President of the Union of the Students in Ireland (USI), his platform rests on three pillars: empowerment, collaboration, and advocacy. He presents this in his manifesto outlining his vision for: Hidden Costs, To lobby for the funding of associated costs with college such as software and materials.

Apprenticeship Representative Organisation, Liaise with relevant organisations for apprentices' voices on panels.

NStEP Refresh, to refresh the NStEP programme to make sure it aligns with the needs of Student Unions, with the input of student trainers, and people who have and haven't used the program.

North and South of Ireland Mobility of entry to education, Advocate for greater support for guidance teachers to support students looking at cross-border education.

FET representation within USI, to work with FET's, to bring their voice and representation within USI and on the national level.

StudentSurvey.ie Redesign, this year, worked on the student survey being pulled for the year to be modernised and redesigned. Wants to make sure that students' interest is at the heart of this data collection.

Trade Union collaboration and strengthen our relationships. collaboration between USI and trade unions in advocating for a more equal future. It is key that with closer relations we stand work in union solitary.

A number of questions were asked, which included the following:

Q. Student survey, what would you do to support the increase of dropouts?

A. Not all dropouts are bad, this is where hidden costs are transparent, so that students can afford to go to college.

Q. How do you intend to lobby for hidden costs?

Q. You mention trade unions, how do you intend to collaborate with trade unions?

A. Wants to stand in solidarity with the unions and not against.

Byran's full manifesto can be found [here](#).

VP Equality and Citizenship:

Sam Mooney

Sam Mooney - VP for Diversity and Inclusion in DCU – Ran successful multicultural, disability and Rainbow week. Is Chair of DCU's neurodivergent society for two years. Manifesto items mentioned were Equality, plans to continue the lobbying for better trans healthcare. Campaign visits to educate SU's and students on how to make campus events neurodivergent friendly.

Citizenship, Sam wants to continue the campaign for voter registration.

Educate students on the constitution and exactly that for which they are voting. Also educate students about minority disparities with the impact of climate change. Events, Revamp Pink Training with more intersectionality events. Student forums for events such as Empower and Power of Disability.

A number of questions were asked, which included the following:



Q. This year TU Dublin SU has been vocal on trans health, what would you do other than lobby for this?

A. Would advocate by creating a student campaign group for trans rights. Campus visits and informational posts on the LGBTQA+ Community.

Q. Do you have any plans to help international students to integrate?

A. Wants to be on campus to make sure that campuses are engaging with international students.

Q. You might not be allowed on to campus how will we know about your events?

A. Plans for social media to be better and to be sending out emails and letting students know they are there.

Q. How will you support students with physical and physical disabilities?

A. Wants to create awareness to all students.

Q. Palestine will campaign continue?

A. Yes.

Q. How would you make sure engagement is increased?

A. Has disabilities experience would start events early and get feedback from students.

Sam's full manifesto can be found [here](#).

VP Welfare:

Kelda McManus - No Speech was given.

Kelda's Manifesto can be found [here](#).

VP Dublin:

Emma Monahan

Emma Monahan – Emma gave speech – VP DCU, 5 main points, Accommodation – After spending much of the year in DCU working on securing accommodation for students, Emma will continue to liaise with landlords and deal with queries. Is also fully equipped to fight for more purpose built student accommodation. Will support all smaller unions coming from a larger union.

Support for all unions, increase student awareness about USI and political engagement. Plans to be on the ground as often as possible and helping member organisations.

Political Engagement. Voter registration and political awareness so that students will have their voices heard.

Transport and Commuter Students With the accommodation crisis, would like to work with the USI VP for Campaigns to run a Dublin wide commuter student campaign, for their voices to be heard. will also endeavour to strengthen and formalise USI's relationship with the National Transport Association, to ensure that the student voice is central to any future transport developments and decisions. PTOs and Class Reps Part time officers, wants to make sure that they are given support and training where needed. Wants to deliver in-person training for part time officers, with resources that they can take with them and share with their peers who are also in leadership positions.

Several questions were asked to the candidate, which included the following:



Q. Welfare for international students, they do not have access to tools that other students have like for example laptop loans. How are you going to support?

A. Not aware of this.

Q. There is a lack of transport for the blanch campus, how would you look to improve this?

A. Some kind of Dublin wide campaign, getting student feedback and possible a written letter.

Q. AST – The Dublin region has a crisis with homelessness, how would you support homeless students?

A. Would like to help by helping the colleges who do not have student accommodation, collaborating with communities in getting digs for students.

Q. How would you improve the current situation regarding electric scooters and bikes?

A. Cycle lanes, there is a lot of information on this at present but will work on this.

Q. How will we teach students about politics, how can we get students to engage in politics?

A. Making awareness, getting away from phones and social media and getting on the ground to explain to students.

Emma's full manifesto can be found [here](#).

VP Postgraduate:

Sachin Yadav Sachin Yadav, secretary of his college.

Five things for his manifesto – Guarantee of Living Pay, Mandate living wage for every researcher. Special budget for conferences by the university.

Visa Issues, Visa slots reserved for international conferences. Spouse visa should be allowed for PHD researchers.

Employee Status, PHD researchers to be treated as workers at the university.

Guarantee of Equitable Treatment, waiver of visa fee every year. Same access to health and disability benefit.

Cultural and Academic Programs, organise a series of academic programs.

Facilitate cultural programs to promote diversity and inclusivity within academic community.

Sarah Fitzpatrick - DCU

SUSI - Fee coverage only at a maximum of €6,270. Would aim to work with the VP Welfare on bringing light to this as postgrad barriers to Gov supports are often ignored.

National level guidance on Access Scholarships National level guidance on Student Parent Supports Work.

For Research postgraduates some HEIs have access scholarships some do not. Would like to gather information on access opportunities to postgraduate courses. New students over 23's, parents cannot claim rent relief. This is a clear exclusion for a lot of postgraduate students who cannot afford to earn enough outside of their course to pay for rent. Campaigns on PhD stipend issues have been fractured across the country. Would like to work with the VP Campaigns and MOs to push a collective national effort in showing our disapproval of treatment of funded and unfunded PhD students.

Many institutions have "subject to annual fee increases" for postgrad courses. Would review these fee increases and create a report capturing fee increases in comparison with inflation and living wage etc. changes.



A number of questions were asked to both candidates, which included the following.

Questions to both – How would you stop universities from over charging fees?

A. Universities are so under supported by the government – getting a proper report of increase fees and comparing to minimum wage.

Q. How will you split your time from Galway and Ireland?

A. Has friends in both Galway and Dublin

Q. What do you think is the biggest issue that Postgrads face?

A. More mental health for students and more scholarships.

A. Fees are the one thing that has most effect on students.

Sachin Yadav’s Manifesto can be found [here](#).

Sarah Fitzpatrick’s Manifesto can be found [here](#).

VP Gaeilge:

Blaithin Sheehy (English Version here)

Bláithín Nic a t-Sithigh is ainm dom. Is as Daingean Uí Chúis i gcontae Chiarraí dom. Is cainteoir dúchais Gaeilge mé agus is í an Ghaeilge mo chéad teanga. Teastaíonn uaim ionadaíocht a dhéanamh agus a bheith mar ghuth ag mic léinn uile triú leibhéal na hÉirinn ó thaobh na Gaeilge de. Tá céim agam sa Ghaeilge agus Stair ó Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh. I mbliana bhíos mar an Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge le Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn. Creidim go bhfuil sé tábhachtach Aontas na Mac Léinn a bheith againn a thacaíonn lena mhic léinn agus an luach atá acu agus ar a dtuairimí. Tar éis dom bheith mar an Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge i mbliana, ba bhreá liom leanúint ar aghaidh ag déanamh ionadaíocht ar son riachtanais Gaelainne na mac léinn uile AMLÉ.

Discussion

7. AOB

No AOB

8. Date of Next Meeting

Action item